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Diversity (/)

African American Initiative

The History

Under the leadership of the first Vice Chancellor for Equity & Inclusion, Gibor Basiri, the Division was working to address data from the University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) that was released by UCOP March 14, 2014. According to the survey, African American students at Berkeley said the campus climate was very poor.

Independent of this work, the Black Student Union (BSU) developed ten demands in response to the survey. These two pieces became the basis for the African American Initiative that was endorsed by then Chancellor Nicholas Dirks in 2015.

Objectives

- Help to provide outreach and engagement opportunities to support the vision of raising \$20 million endowed and current-use scholarship funds for African American undergraduates (first year and transfer students) in partnership with private, nonprofit organizations.
- Improve the recruitment and yield of undergraduate and graduate African American students and other underrepresented ethnic minorities.
- Boost the social, personal, and academic support provided to current and future African American students.
- Target a range of efforts to improve the classroom and campus climate, including training and pedagogical resources for faculty and Graduate Student Instructors.
- Increase African American representation in Berkeley's senior management.
- Improve recruitment and retention, boost the professional support provided, and target efforts to improve the campus climate for African American staff and faculty.

Committee Chair

- Takiyah Jackson, Director, African American Student Development

Committee Co-chairs

- Melissa Charles, Asst. Director, African American Student Development
- Blake Simons, Asst. Director, Fannie Lou Hamer Black Resource Center
- Brooke Hendrickson, Director of Development/Student Experience and Diversity
- Miya Hayes, Deputy Director, Center for Educational Partnerships
- Ashley Kelley, Program Manager, Public Service Center
- Yuki Burton, Assistant Director, Educational Opportunity Program

Key Stakeholders

- African American Student Development and the Fannie Lou Hamer Black Resource Center
- African American Studies
- Black Student Union (BSU)
- Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA)
- Black Recruitment & Retention Center (BRRRC)
- Black Staff & Faculty Organization (BSFO)
- California Alumni Association (CAA)
- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)
- Office of the Chancellor
- Division of Equity & Inclusion
- Division of Student Affairs
- The San Francisco Foundation
- University Development & Alumni Affairs (UDAR)

Updates

- Fall Semester 2018 the first AAI scholarships were awarded to 28 African American students. They will receive \$8,000 each year for up to five years. Fall Semester 2020, AAI Scholarships were awarded to 44 African American students.
- Six subcommittees have been formed to develop action plans and strategies for each objective of the initiative.
- The University Development and Alumni Relations Office (UDAR) is continuing its work to establish a \$20 million African American Student Scholarship Endowment
- The Fannie Lou Hamer Black Resource Center opened in February 2017. It supports the needs of students in the realms of academic, social-emotional, and career development as well as cultural and community enrichment.
- Two Black psychologists who understand the hostile campus climate have been hired.
- Recruitment & Yield: Admissions Equity & Inclusion training

- A dedicated AAI/EOP Academic Counselor for the AAI Scholars is scheduled to start Fall 2020.

For more information on the initiative please contact:

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Ten Initial Demands

Developed by the Black Student Union
(<https://diversity.berkeley.edu/ten-demands-presented-bsu>)



Initiative Announcement

2015 announcement from the Chancellor's Office.

(<https://diversity.berkeley.edu/african-american-initiative-announcement>)





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[Back to Top](#)